



## ***Milford DO – IT / Main Street Program***

### **~TOWN REPORT 2005~**

Milford Downtown Ongoing Improvement Team, a New Hampshire Main Street Program, is a public-private partnership working to promote, revitalize and enhance the historic, natural, social and economic vitality of downtown Milford. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization made up of a volunteer board of directors, four committees and a full-time Executive Director. Specific projects and programs of Milford DO-IT come directly from the community and are based on Milford's inherent assets. This year, we were especially pleased when New Hampshire Magazine recognized our efforts when it granted Milford with its award for "Best Small Downtown".

Through 2005, many individuals, businesses and organizations joined us demonstrating their belief in the importance of the downtown, donating their time, energy, and financial resources to the Program, which allowed us to make the following accomplishments:

- **South Street Improvement Project:** Milford DO-IT continued to take a lead role in pushing this project forward. In the summer, DO-IT and the Department of Building and Planning submitted an application for Transportation Enhancements funding which was voted the #1 priority project for the region. In addition, the Town received word that it had received a Federal earmark for \$2.8 million for the South Street (and other downtown) projects. Pending final approval, we look forward working with the Town on defining and bringing this project to fruition over the course of the next five years.
- **Bandstand Restoration Project:** DO-IT applied grant funds totaling \$14,500, awarded from the NH State Council on the Arts and the Milford Felice J. and Elide T. Marchesi Trust to restore the Town's bandstand. The Bandstand has served as a community gathering place and cultural center for the past 110 years and DO-IT is thrilled that it was able to ensure that it will continue to be at the heart of the Milford Oval for many years to come.
- **Promotional activities:** DO-IT collaborated with PSNH to develop a high-quality 30 second TV commercial and print advertising campaign which highlighted Milford as a positive place. The commercial continues to be aired regularly on WMUR.
- **Seasonal Activities:** DO-IT continued our annual tradition of collaborating with the Keyes Art Group to promote the Annual Keyes Art Show and bring children's arts and crafts activities to downtown. During the summer, we were pleased to offer another season of four consecutive Lunchtime Concerts for the Town. Throughout the growing season, we promoted the Milford Farmers Market and ran three special event days to enhance the market environment and attract visitors. Perhaps the best-known and certainly the best attended event organized by Milford DO-IT is the Milford Great Pumpkin Great Festival. This year was the Festival's 16th anniversary and the many dedicated volunteers and supporters and the terrific turnout showed that this event remains an important part of Milford's annual traditions. For Christmas, we worked in conjunction with the Lions Club to deck the Oval for the holidays, including the Town Christmas tree. We also hosted

the Jingle on Downtown decorating/lighting and community caroling event in early December, replete with hot cocoa, popcorn and cookies.

Many towns across the state recognize the value of having either an economic development officer or downtown coordinator and have hired Town employees for this position. In Milford, DO-IT has taken on this role and has been able to produce notable results at a cost which is significantly less than if the Town were to handle these activities in-house. In 2005, Milford DO-IT was funded in part by the community via a warrant article in the amount of \$15,000, which is approximately 18% of our annual budget, and the remainder is received primarily through fund-raising and private donations. All monies are directly re-invested in projects and programs that aim to improve the downtown for the benefit of the benefit of the entire Town. By improving the state of the Downtown environment and serving as a resource for diverse community interests, we offer a service of value to the whole Town.

We continue to be honored to serve the community of Milford and look forward to a successful 2006. As always, we welcome and encourage all to get involved by calling 672-4567.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Board of the Milford Main Street Program DO-IT,

*Jessica Hejtmanek, Executive Director*

*Alan Woolfson, President Board of Directors*

2005 Board Members: JerriAnne Boggis, Kent Chappell, Mark Constable, Dawn Condra, Ed Killam, Noreen O'Connell, Dave Solomon, Janet Spalding, Jack Ruonala, Alan Woolfson (President), Chuck Worcester.



## ***Milford Great Pumpkin Festival***

The 2005 Milford Great Pumpkin Festival

October 7, 8, 9

A Traditional Event for Milford

Over the past 16 years, the Milford Great Pumpkin Festival has grown to be a local and regional tradition. Originally begun to raise funds to restore the Town Hall Auditorium, Milford's Pumpkin Festival is today organized on behalf of the Town of Milford by the Milford Main Street Program Downtown Ongoing Improvement Team (DO-IT) with the purpose of enhancing the quality of life in Milford, building community, and providing a place for residents and visitors to simply have fun.

**The Benefits of the Festival** - Besides the obvious enjoyment derived from the weekend, this Festival has been a tremendous benefit to the Town. The Festival generates valuable positive public relations, provides an attraction for bringing new customers to our local businesses and visitors to Town, an opportunity for Milford non-profits organizations to raise money for their causes, and a venue for performances by local talent. Perhaps most importantly, the Festival provides residents a chance to gather together with their friends and neighbors to see the community in a different, more festive light.

As a fundraiser, the Festival has allowed the organizers the opportunity to accomplish a great deal for our community. Milford Main Street Program/DO-IT has used the funds generated to help coordinate renovations to the Oval area, install new lighting,

benches, bike racks, and trash barrels, plant gardens, hang banners and holiday decorations, and promote the downtown as the heart of our community by planning popular events and activities.

**Overview of the 2005 Festival** - What's a Pumpkin Festival without a little rain? Despite the rainy weather, this year's Pumpkin Festival was a great success. None of this would have been possible without the hundreds of volunteers who dedicated countless hours to ensuring that the event was a success. Their dedication, spirit and energy, even in spite of all the rain, are all greatly appreciated.

The 2005 Festival included many of the events that had proven popular and successful in past years. The Festival began Friday with the traditional opening ceremony which included the pumpkin runner and Town Hall lighting, followed by a musical performance by Tattoo on the Oval stage, a showing of Mel Brook's film version of Dracula at the Amato Center for Performing Arts and a return performance by Stitch, in the Town Hall. Saturday and Sunday's activities included favorites such as the great pumpkin weigh-in, pumpkin painting, pumpkin and carved pumpkin sales, pumpkin catapult, arts & crafts fair, scarecrow making, haunted trail, face painting and other children's activities, food vendors, waffle breakfast, chili round-up and a terrific line up of a fantastic mix of regional musical and performing artists who provide Festival attendees with three days of high-quality acts. On Saturday we saw Steve Lechner's Magic, Etc., Steve Dreher and Friends, Roberta Woolfson's Lights Up Drama, The Flying Irish Dance Troupe, Rootes, The Whatnot, Sloppy Joe, The Rakes of Milford, MC Archer & Maria Zenishek, The Goodtime Charlies, Royer's One Man Band, Basil Harris, Russell Hill and four great comedians, Greg Boggis, Rob Steen, Tom Hayes and John David of the North Shore Comedy Club at the newly-opened Amato Center for Performing Arts. The Sunday line up continued with Amy Conley, Mikial Robertson, Reaganta, Scott Kepnes Funky Jam, Familiar Echoes, Uncle George, Down Dog, and Warren Rasmussen. We thank all of the performers for sharing their talents with the Festival.

Invaluable support also comes from the Festival sponsors Ocean National Bank and Kokko Realty, and to individual event sponsors Alene Candles, Milford Lumber Company, Centrix Bank, Contemporary Chrysler/Dodge, First Colebrook Bank, The Cabinet Press, The Hippo Press, and Amigos Mexican Cantina.

Each year, Milford Police, Ambulance, Fire and Public Works Departments do a tremendous job of ensuring the success of the Festival by providing outstanding support services throughout the entire weekend. Their involvement in the Festival is made possible by funding approved by Milford voters in March 2005. The Milford Great Pumpkin Festival would not be possible without this support and we thank all residents who supported that article. We encourage you to keep the spirit of the Pumpkin Festival and the spirit of Milford alive by voting to approve Town support services for of the Festival again this year.

On behalf of the Boards, staff and volunteers of the Milford Main Street Program DO-IT, we are proud to be able to continue to organize this event to the community and look forward to seeing you at the 2006 Festival.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Jessica Hejtmanek, Executive Director*

*Alan Woolfson, President Board of Directors*